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ABSTRACT

School board difficulties are not a problem of people, but of process. This book presents a radically new model of board governance that energizes board members to build a strong, vibrant organization that achieves its goals. Following the preface, chapter 1 recounts the varieties of boards, their predictable difficulties, and the need for more precise principles of governance. Chapter 2 makes a case for a new approach to policy making and what boards should make policy about. Four new categories of the governing role are developed. The third chapter examines the depth and breadth of board policy in a way that frees boards from staff details and an endless stream of approvals. Policies about organizational results are discussed in the fourth chapter. Chapter 5 covers those policies that allow board control over administrative and programmatic action, with a focus on ethics and prudence. Policies that establish an effective board-staff relationship through a chief executive officer are described in the sixth chapter. Chapter 7 addresses the board's relationship to its stockholder equivalents and its primary accountability to that trust. The eighth chapter extends the same discussion of board role to subgroups of the board. Ways to keep the board on track with structured discipline and long-range agendas are described in chapter 9. Finally, the importance of thinking big, keeping the dream out front, and other ingredients of strategic leadership are discussed in chapter 10. Appendices contain varieties of applications, guidelines for bylaws, and a list of contributed board policies. (LMI)

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